KHAN SAHIB M. K. KHADIR PILLAI (*Nominated*): May I know how many societies are in existence in Kuttanad and Alwaye?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): I have not got Taluk-war figures. I know the total number of Societies in the State rose from 780 to 830 after the employment of these Inspectors.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): How many applications for loans are there?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): Sorry I have not got the figures.

PRESIDENT: I do not know how that arises here.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): It is necessary to know whether the retention of the staff is required or not.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Are there not men in the department already who get more pay than these people?

PRESIDENT: That has been already answered.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): I beg to oppose the grant.

PRESIDENT: Have you anything to say, Mr. Paramesvara Aiyar?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): I have nothing more to say, as Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai has not stated the grounds for his opposition.

PRESIDENT: I shall now put the Demand to the vote of the House.

The Demand was put to the vote and carried.

DEMAND XX—PUBLIC WORKS.

MR. K. V. NATESA AIYAR (*Chief Engineer*): Sir, I rise to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 26,000 under Demand XX—Public Works, for the following:

(1) Investigating the improvement of river communications in the State—Rs. 1,000;

(2) Structural alterations to the main building, and the addition of a wing to the Chemical Laboratory, in H. H. the Maha Raja's College of Science, Trivandrum—Rs. 15,000;

(3) Repairs to be carried out through the agency of this Department, to the Vernacular School buildings damaged by the flood of Karkatakam 1099—Rs. 10,000.

The sum of Rs. 1,000 asked for under item (1) is intended to meet the charges of the office staff, travelling allowance and contingencies, anticipated to be incurred in the current year from Kumbham to Karkatakam, consequent on the proposed deputation of an Executive Engineer for six months for conducting the investigation. The staff will consist of a typist-clerk on Rs. 25 per mensem and 2 peons on Rs. 9 each per mensem, costing Rs. 43 per mensem or Rs. 215 for 5 months in this

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. S. Krishna Aiyar.]

year. The travelling allowance of the staff and the contingencies of the office will require a provision of Rs. 785 for this year. The total amount required to be voted on is thus Rs. 1,000.

The question of improving river communications was pressed on the attention of Government in one form or another at the sessions of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, and a resolution on the same question was to have been moved by Mr. K. C. Mamman Mappillai at the last Makaram session of the Council. The question was also considered by the Economic Development Board at their meeting on the 12th May, 1924, and the Board resolved that Government should be requested to investigate the question with particular reference to the Pampa and the Muvatupuzha rivers to begin with, to facilitate transport in the upper reaches of the rivers. The President of the Board, in addressing the Government, brought to notice the main points urged at the Conference. They are:—

(i) Travancore rivers are navigable only for short distances from their mouths during the dry season and by providing transport facilities in these rivers the submontane tracts through which they pass could be developed considerably.

(ii) Several useful things produced in these places do not find a market for want of transport facilities and, consequently the economic condition of the people is far from satisfactory.

(iii) It costs much to open up and maintain roads and railways, but rivers could be opened up at comparatively small cost, and it is also the experience everywhere that water transport is very cheap.

(iv) With some improvements, the rivers could be made navigable up to the limit of the cultivated area, and the produce from those places easily brought down.

It is an admitted fact that the present state of the inland rivers leaves room for improvement and it is time that the question of their improvement is taken up systematically. This can be done only after a thorough investigation of the present conditions and possible improvements to such communications in the State. It is highly desirable to start the investigation work without further loss of time. There is no provision for this work in the budget for 1,100, and it is, therefore, that I move the Council for a supplementary grant for this purpose.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): May I know whether the investigation is to be confined only to rivers or whether the proposal includes canals also?

MR. K. V. NATESA AIYAR (*Chief Engineer*): The main work is confined to rivers. If there is time, the question of canal communications will also be looked into.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): May we expect the report within six months?

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

MR. K. V. NATESA AIYAR (*Chief Engineer*): The work will be pushed on as much as possible.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur cum Pattanamtitta*): Which is the first river to be taken up?

MR. K. V. NATESA AIYAR (*Chief Engineer*): To begin with, the Pampa and the Muvattupuzha rivers will be taken up as recommended by the Economic Development Board.

The sum of Rs. 15,000 asked for under item (2) is for the work of carrying out some structural alterations in the main building of H. H. the Maha Raja's College of Science, Trivandrum, and of adding a wing on the south side of the Chemical Laboratory building.

A deputation consisting of Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai, Member, Legislative Council, Mr. N. Ramakrishna Pillai, Member, Legislative Council, and some others met the Dewan on the 7th July, 1924, and presented a representation regarding the admission of a larger number of students in the College of Science. In reply to the deputation, the Dewan said, *inter alia*, that Government proposed to vigorously explore further possibilities of expansion in the College of Science and do all that was feasible before the next academic year came round. The Director of Public Instruction sent up, for the orders of Government, a report from the Principal of the College of Science embodying the proposals of the College Council in the matter. As these proposals involved some structural alterations in the existing buildings and the construction of new buildings, the Dewan inspected the College on the 29th January, 1925, in the company of the Director of Public Instruction, the Ag. Principal of the College, the Professor of Chemistry and myself. It was decided that a few structural alterations in the main building might be made and that the existing Chemical Laboratory buildings might be extended and a wing added to it. This alone will make it possible for a larger number of students to be admitted in all the groups and to give facilities for Intermediate laboratory work in Chemistry, which are now wanting.

The above proposals involve an expenditure of Rs. 40,000. The construction of the extension has to be taken up immediately, as it will take about 18 months to complete it, and as it is desirable that the additional accommodation asked for by the Professor of Chemistry should be provided at least in time for the academic year 1926—27. It is expected that a sum of Rs. 15,000 can be spent on the work in the current financial year. It is therefore that I now move for a supplementary grant for this purpose.

The sum of Rs. 10,000 asked for under item (3) is for the repairs and restoration of the larger Vernacular School buildings damaged by the floods of Karkatakam 1099. The necessity for the restoration of smaller and larger buildings has been already explained by Mr. Stephenson while moving for the supplementary grant for his department for the smaller buildings. Out of the total of Rs. 15,000 required for the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

purpose, a sum of Rs. 5,000 for smaller works has been voted in the supplementary grant under Education, while the supplementary grant of Rs. 10,000 asked for under Public Works is for carrying out the larger works which have to be tackled by this Department.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): I have great pleasure in supporting the Demand, especially the first portion, *viz.*, investigating the important river communications in the State. I am very glad that the Chief Engineer has come forward with the proposal. I wish the work had been done much earlier. I am very glad that such an important and neglected piece of work has been undertaken now at least. I do not know whether six months' time will be enough for a thorough investigation of the question. I wish the Chief Engineer would include not only rivers but canals also. There are several neglected canals which have become not navigable now on account of the neglect of the Department and their investigation demands consideration and immediate attention.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedamangad*): With regard to the investigation of river communications, I am in entire agreement with Mr. Nidiry and I heartily support the Chief Engineer's proposition. But I have to observe that the investigation should not be of the nature of similar investigations that have been made by the various other departments. This kind of opening up of river communications, so far as I am aware, is not very common in Southern India, but I am told that in parts of Bombay Presidency there are such instances; and I also learn from one, whose words I must respect and who knows the thing after ascertaining from various sources, that there are such river communications in Italy. If we embark on this scheme, we should not do it in a perfunctory manner. We want a competent Engineer who is conversant with the details of the work, one who has seen other countries in which similar work is done. There is no doubt that there are some intelligent officers in the department. I know one or two who are very intelligent and efficient and who love the country very much indeed. But I do not think, Sir, that it is enough if people are made to investigate this question with *a priori* conceptions. We want actual experience. Therefore I trust that Government will consider this question in all its aspects: and if they want more money to conduct a really good investigation I trust they will come before this Council for a very much larger grant. Let us not stint money. Let us spend more money on these rivers ("*Hear, hear.*"): the matter has been discussed by the Economic Development Board and it was after a lengthy discussion that we adopted a resolution. It is imperative that the matter should be enquired into; and it should not only be enquired into but something must be done soon to make these rivers navigable throughout the year.

With regard to the structural alterations in the College of Science, I am in entire agreement with the Chief Engineer; but on the question

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

of adding a wing to the chemical laboratory, I am for delaying it for some time. The Government have been spending money on public buildings in the Education Department out of all proportion to the condition of our finances. We, on this side of the House, had been protesting from time to time; and although we were objecting to the building of very large blocks of buildings for schools, the expert educational opinion of those times was against us, and inspite of our protests large buildings reared up their proud heads. But I subsequently learnt, in the course of discussion in this Council, from no less a person than Mr. Hodgson, that only about 500 students migh tbe conveniently accommodated in one building. If, instead of having one very big building, we have more than one, it will be a matter of convenience. However, this question of general principle I do not enter into. With regard to the chemistry laboratory, the bifurcation of the College has made it possible for the authorities to give admission to a much larger number of students in His Highness' College of Science. The University Committee have sent in their report and they have arrived at their conclusion after a careful and anxious consideration. The question that we shall have to consider is whether we should have a University; and if that principle is adhered to, we are to make up our mind to have a University either for Travancore or for Kerala. Along with that, the size, type and location will have to be considered. Therefore I am not for spending any money to add this or that wing to the physics or the chemistry laboratory; probably the adjacent plots of land, which are in the occupation of other departments, might have to be acquired for the purpose of the College. It has been mentioned in this very House that the large strip of land adjoining the College on the western side may have to be added if the Government come to the conclusion embodied in the University Committee's report. It will then be time for us to consider the question of adding buildings in the premises of the Science College. Now if we spend any considerable sum—and possibly the experts of that time who view the question in the proper spirit and in a better light with the assistance of the G. O. on the subject may think differently—they may possibly have to say that this is not the type of building that they would adopt, so that we may have to put those wings to uses which are different and we may have to spend a large amount of money in equipping a future laboratory. So I request my friends on both sides of the House to consider this aspect of the question. We find that a larger number of students are being admitted than in previous years. The matter is not so very urgent and it may wait till the Government peruse the University Committee's report and come to a decision.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Does Mr. Velu Pillai say that more students could be admitted into the College than those admitted now?

PRESIDENT: He does not say so. He says that for the admission of a larger number of students additional accommodation is necessary.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[President.]

MR. A. HOOGEWERF (*Nominated*): Does he maintain that the present number is the maximum strength ?

PRESIDENT: He does not say so.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): I do not understand what is meant by the maximum number. In the light of the President's explanation, I do not want to say anything on that. Let us not spend money in this piecemeal fashion. I would only request this House to grapple with this question after the Government pass orders on the Committee's report.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzka*): How many years will it take for the University to materialise ?

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): That is a question which I ask my friend to ask the Government. My friend ought to know it as well as myself, as he too is a member of the University Committee. Anyhow it is a question which I am not bound to answer. In the nature of the mistakes that have been already committed by the Department I would again beg the House to consider whether it would be right to embark on similar ventures without clear ideas and without considering the possible developments in all directions. I therefore oppose that portion of the grant.

PRESIDENT: We will now adjourn and meet again to-morrow at 11-30 A. M. The remaining supplementary grants will be taken up to-morrow and finished first.

The Council adjourned at 5 P. M.

S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR,
Secretary to the Legislative Council.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly